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ABSTRACT

The Arlington "Step Forward" project, in operation since summer of 1968, was developed to meet the specific needs of migrant children with emphasis on the Mexican American migrant child. The primary objectives were to improve health and nutrition, to replace traditional approaches with an enlightened curriculum, and to provide an enriched social and cultural environment. The "Listen Look Learn" System of beginning reading instruction was used to provide a more individualized approach to teaching reading and communication skills. Extended day classes were provided twice a week for further activities in language development and social adjustment. Two creative projects used in the 1970 summer program and continued in the regular school program were a musical drama project to encourage expression, imagination, and self-confidence, and social dancing for upper-grade youth and parents to strengthen community relations and home-school relations. Cooperation between local organizations and the school resulted in the provision of health services, clothing, and gifts for the migrant children. (JH)

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THE *ARLINGTON - HARQUAHALA* STORY

A STEP FORWARD PROGRAM

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FOR THE EDUCATION OF

MIGRANT CHILDREN

ARIZONA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
W. P. SHOFSTALL, PH. D., SUPERINTENDENT

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ARLINGTON'S "STEP FORWARD" PROGRAM

JOHN C. LEFFUE, SUPERINTENDENT
Arlington School District No. 47

A REPORT ON THE PROGRAM FOR MIGRANT CHILD

EDUCATION IN THE ARLINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

Prepared and Submitted by:

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Coordinator of the Migrant Child Education Program

[1970]

A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

THE FOLLOWING STORY OF ARLINGTON'S "STEP FORWARD" PROGRAM COULD NOT HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED WITHOUT THE COOPERATION OF:

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The Board of Education
ARLINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 47

The Administration and Faculty of Arlington
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 47

PREFACE

The Arlington School District accepts the fact that if our educational system is to achieve our planned goals of preparing the youth of today to reach their greatest potential in assuming their future places in society, it is most evident that methodology other than traditional approaches must be utilized.

Since the largest ethnic group in our school district is the Mexican-American child, it was realized that a program must be developed to meet the specific needs of the Mexican-American child, as well as those special needs of all other migrant students irregardless of ethnicity or background.

We, as administrators and teachers feel that we must help children understand and appreciate their rich cultural heritage, in addition to aiding them in becoming respected productive members of our American society. As an enlightened school system, we cannot condone the exclusion of any minority from our society whenever developing objectives to meet the instructional, health and nutritional needs of all migrant children. This we also feel is in keeping with the purposes and objectives proposed by the Arizona Department of Education for educating all youngsters in our public schools.

THE HISTORY OF ARLINGTON'S "STEP FORWARD" PROGRAM

Through the assistance of the Arizona Department of Education, Migrant Child Education Division, as funded by P.L. 89-750, the Arlington School District began its project in the summer of 1968.

The Program had three prime objectives:

1. Improved Health and Nutrition - Each child at Arlington School and Harquahala School is provided with a breakfast snack, as well as a "Class A" lunch. Many children who are not able to afford a hot lunch are now able to enjoy a well-balanced meal.

   The health program consists of dental examinations and eye and ear pre-exams for all pupils, with physical examinations when deemed necessary. In addition, all required immunizations are provided. The school nurse uses home visitations and the services of the Maricopa County Health Clinic in order to coordinate the health program and provide the best care for all children. The clinic is available twice monthly for medical care. Health records are maintained and kept current on each in-coming and out-going child.

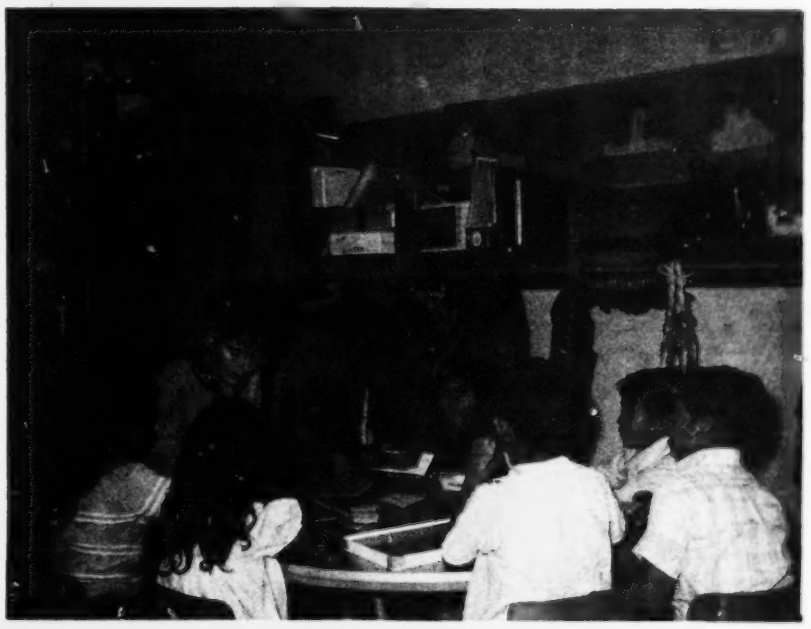
2. An Enlightened Curriculum - Under the supervision of a reading consultant, our revised program for testing, placement and evaluation was begun. This provided a new approach to solving learning difficulties. This entire program encompassed

the building of language development skills, speaking, listening, reading and writing.

The program included a variety of activities and use of various materials. Several series of high interest, low vocabulary books, field trips, visual and auditory media, educational games, music and drama were implemented as a most important part of the curriculum allowing the bilingual pupil a better chance to understand and develop his communication skills.

3. <u>An Enriched Social and Cultural Environment.</u>

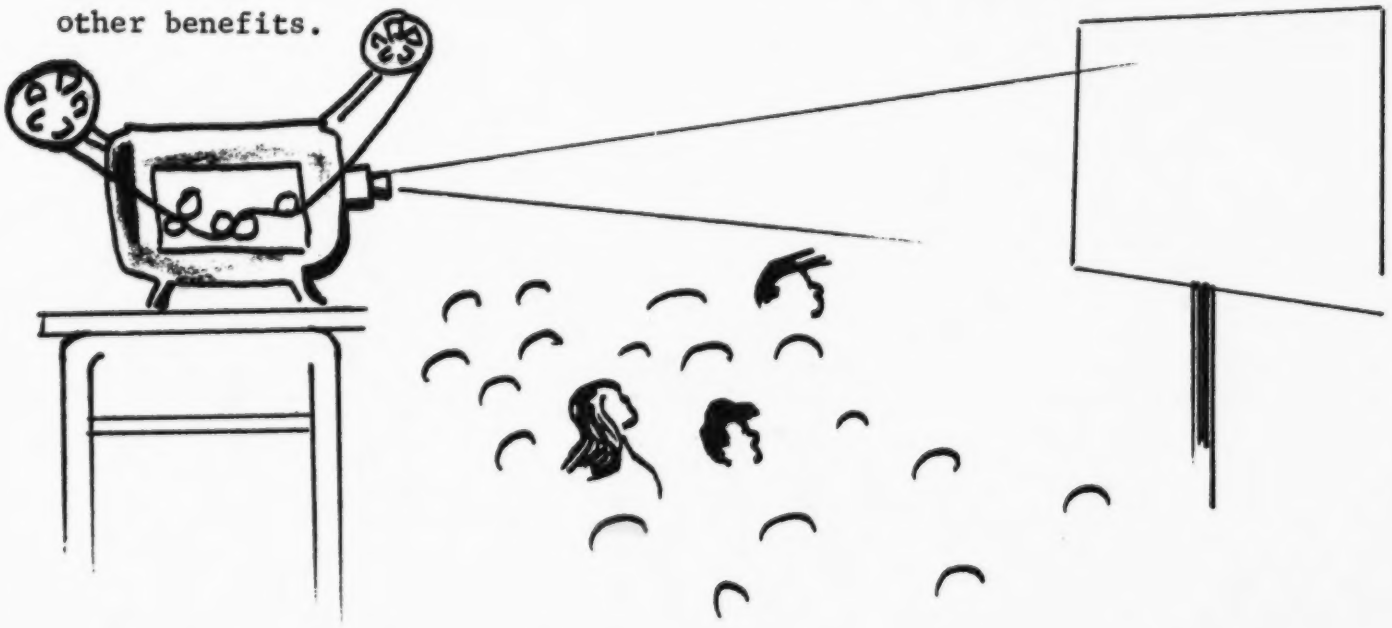
Each class stressed an informal classroom environment. One in which the children felt comfortable and able to express themselves. The pupils completed projects in groups and committees. Some team teaching was introduced and seemed to be most effective.



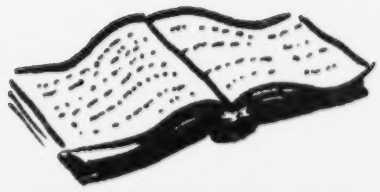
Separate paperback libraries were installed in the upper-grade classrooms and reading centers were established in the lower grades. In addition to this, the school's well equipped library is available at all times to students wishing to use its facilities.

Another innovative social project initiated was the planning of special dances for all the young people of the community. Parents were invited. This helped to strengthen the community and "close the gap" between home and school. It was observed that children from the disadvantaged environment "let themselves go", and participated in the dancing with great enthusiasm. Both popular "rock 'n roll" and records by Mexican performers in Spanish were played at these dances. The success of these dances was great. The children left these dances with great anticipation for the next occasion.

A film library was established at Harquahala School which is shared with Arlington School. These up-to-date color films have added greatly to the student's learning, especially in areas of discussion skills, vocabulary development, observation skills, social studies enrichment, cummunications skills, and countless other benefits.



AN INNOVATIVE READING PROGRAM



Most educators and reading specialists today are firm in their belief that a more individualized approach must be made in teaching reading and communication skills than the traditional approaches previously provided. This is especially true where learning difficulties resulting from sociological and psychological identity problems are prevalent and are compounded by bilingual and cultural ones.

We feel that schools can greatly improve their effectiveness in developing reading and communication skills through application of techniques and materials as used in a total communication system. Educational Developmental Laboratories has been involved with communication systems for many years.

This plan of action broadens the scope and span of the migrant child's background of experiences, thereby minimizing many of his former academic problems.

The Listen Look Learn System is a system of beginning reading instruction. It combines many of the newer forms of audio-visual instruction with a variety of uniquely conceived published materials. Careful control over perceptual development is insured through the use of instrument techniques. Word attack and comprehension skills are developed through auto-instructional and teacher-directed activities. Individualized reading in a multi-level

reading, a multi-level high-interest classroom library and extensive use of filmstrips and recordings offer enrichment opportunities. Continuous feedback and appraisal provide a guide for reteaching, reapplication and extension of skills and concepts.

The systems approach utilized in Listen Look Learn provides for the combined development of all the communication skills - looking, listening, reading, writing, observing and speaking - in the primary grades. It provides interlocking, inter-dependent materials and procedures designed to facilitate the accomplishment of specific learning. Listen Look Learn System makes possible more thorough teaching and learning through:

1. Introduction of concepts and skills in careful sequence, from simple to complex, to insure successful performance.

2. Immediate reinforcement of initial learning of a concept or skill coupled with distributed practice to insure retention.

3. Repeated exposures to the same concept or skill from many perspectives and in a variety of instructional contexts.

The Listen Look Learn System provides interrelated materials, equipment and procedures organized into systematic "cycles" of instruction carefully designed to introduce

and reinforce in a unique manner, the content, attitudes, and skills central to successful reading and listening. Vocabulary and concept skills are introduced through the Aud-X, an instrument that uses filmstrips and records in sight-sound through synchronized instruction. The Tack-X, flashing visual materials at high speeds, reinforces vocabulary and reduces the recognition time until each word learned becomes identifiable with minimal clues at sight. Processing training provides for rapid association of words in context. The Controlled Reader develops visual efficiency, good left-to-right directional attack and fluency in silent reading. Specially designed books, samplers and anthologies are used to develop the enjoyment of reading books and the expression of oral reading. Evaluation and reinforcement are provided in each cycle by "My Skills Sheets" and other forms of teacher approaches. Perceptual accuracy and visual efficiency training, eye-hand coordination activities, creative writing, spelling instruction, dictionary usage, listening training, speaking, handwriting, dramatic activities and independent reading are also included as integral parts of the Listen Look Learn System.

The LLL System is composed of twenty Readiness Stages and 100 prereading and instructional cycles. Instruction in the Readiness Stages can begin in Kindergarten or Headstart Programs. The system is programmed to provide the first three years of instruction. A classroom of children with low ability and a greater need for intensive experience-building might require four years or more to complete all aspects successfully, while well-motivated and high-ability children may complete the program in less than three years.

EXTENDED DAY CLASSES

Twice a week, each of the two schools of Arlington School District have extended day classes. Migrant students, with parental approval, stay after school one hour on each of these two days for further activities in language development and social adjustment. An informal atmosphere prevails, and the children are encouraged to participate and express themselves as much as possible.

This period also gives us an opportunity to work with those students who are non-English speaking or have a minimal knowledge of the English language.

Some of the activities included are:

A. Games, both instruccional and recreational.

B. Music - singing, dancing and listening.

C. Dramatic play and readings.

D. Reading for fun.

E. Oral and written reports.

F. Creative projects.

Frequently, children bring records of their choosing. After a session spent in listening and dancing to Mexican records, the Mexican-American students then demonstrate to their regular classes some of the traditional dancing of Mexico.

CREATIVE PROJECTS

The following description is of two projects which were used in our Summer School Program of 1970 and which were so successful that we have continued to use the basic ideas in our Regular School Program. Projects of this type will also be a major part of our Summer School in 1971.

A. Musical-Drama Project

1. Objectives

a. To provide every child with a chance to participate, achieve and know success.

b. To help the child to accept exposure to a live audience and to overcome shyness.

c. To encourage each child to express himself through dialogue and song.

d. To develop imagination and the ability to participate in the organization of skits, songs and dances.

e. To build self-confidence through teacher's praise and audience appreciation.

2. Description of the Project

Each class, Kindergarten through eighth grades was encouraged, with teacher guidance, to plan and organize its particular part in the program. (This program was presented to the community.)

The following is a brief description of the entire musical-drama:

Kindergarten: The kindergarten class helped create, with a great deal of teacher assistance, the original and amusing hats which helped costume them as singing animals and insects. They sang and acted out their respective parts.

First and Second Grades: The theme for this group was "American Folk Music". They were outfitted as pioneers and performed a square dance, frontier songs and a choral reading.

Third and Fourth Grades: These children chose a patriotic theme. Uncle Sam and Miss Liberty were portrayed while the other children, dressed in red, white and blue, sang and acted out several patriotic songs.

Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Grades: These boys and girls wrote several skits on the subject of safety. They created their own dialogue and made their own costumes and stage settings.

This musical-drama gave both the students and their parents a feeling of pride in achievement.

B. Social Dancing

The other successful project was the selecting of a committee of upper-grade students to arrange an afternoon dance for all the young people in the community. Parents were also invited.

This helped to strengthen community relations, and cement closer relations between home and school.

The success of the dance could be measured by the expressions of delight on the faces of the boys and girls.

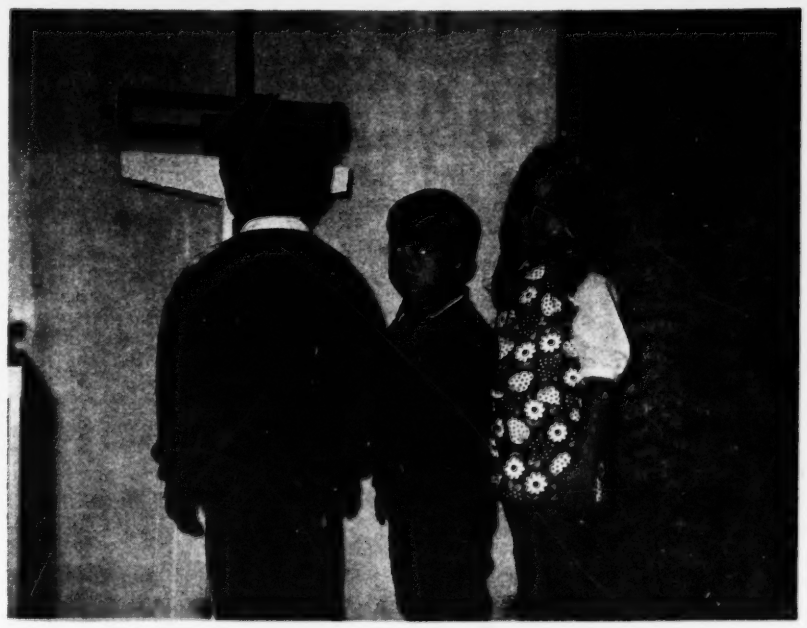
COORDINATION WITH THE COMMUNITY

The cooperation between local organizations and the school is very effective. Four groups who gave significant assistance were: The Lions Club, The Women's Club, The Maricopa County Health Department and a local church.

A. As a follow-up to eye exams, the Lion's Club provided glasses for those children who were shown to need them and whose families were unable to afford them.

The Women's Club and local church supplied the necessary clothing to the students who were unable to attend school regularly because of the lack of proper wearing apparel. Also, the Women's Club supplied stuffed Christmas stockings and distributed them through a "Santa Claus" to the children who might otherwise have had a meager Christmas.

The Maricopa County Health Department holds two free clinics per month in our area. We coordinate our school health program with these clinics in order to give each child the best medical care available.



B. Every effort is being made to establish coordination between the above-mentioned four organizations and other civic groups with our Migrant Program.

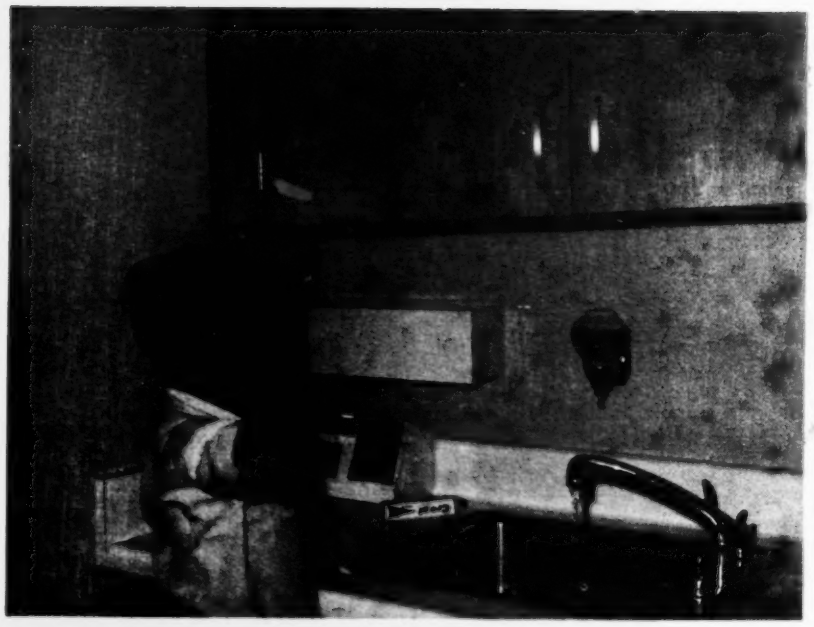
We have met with the leaders of these organizations many times, deciding how best to serve our area.

C. Two of the biggest gaps we need to close are in the fields of psychology and retardation. We have had meetings on these problems with other schools and have discussed the possibilities of some type of program to be worked out.

We are striving toward the goal of a solution to these crucial problems.

"STEP FORWARD" SUMMARY

Arlington School District can point with pride to the many accomplishments brought about as a result of the Migrant Child Education Program funded under P.L. 89-750.



Healthwise, through the morning snacks and Class "A" lunches, the children's improved attitude toward school and learning were noted. For some, it was the only hot meal of the day. We found that an adequate breakfast and a hot lunch program are necessary and vital.

The program provided for medical, dental and eye-ear examinations. As a follow-up, several children received work on their teeth. A considerable number were provided with eye glasses, and one was referred to the County Hospital for treatment of an ear disorder.

In addition to this, general hygiene was programmed in such a way that the children participated with enthusiasm. Cleanliness and neatness became a matter of personal pride.

Home Economics and Physical Education classes made a special effort to change social behavior in the girls in order to improve positive attitudes towards good grooming and general attractive appearance.

Academically, each class had a relaxed classroom environment and the pupils felt very comfortable in this situation.

Instruction on a one-to-one basis was stressed as much as possible and as previously mentioned, team teaching was introduced and proved to be very effective.

Teacher's aides were used in the regular classroom by providing individual help, and remedial instruction with small groups. These aides proved to be invaluable in helping us reach our objectives in the education of the migrant pupil.

Many tangible results of the program have been noticed by the school and community. Most obvious of these is the change in the children's attitude toward school and their concept of self. In relaxing the rigidity of activities in and out of the classroom, there has also been a change in the outlook of parents and teachers as a result of the Migrant Program.

We do, however, feel that this is only a beginning and are making every effort to identify the needs of every child in the Arlington School District. We are looking forward to initiating another "Step Forward" Migrant Child Educational Program as has been provided by the Arizona State Department of Education, Migrant Child Education Division.